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SHELLS FROM MIDWAY

By DR. V. D. P. SPICER

During the current program of defense construction, the Midway Islands, formerly isolated sand bars on a coral reef, and serving as a cable station and over-night stop for trans-Pacific clippers, have been selected for extensive development by the Navy Department. A large force of construction laborers have been employed for periods upward of a year. Lacking other entertainment they have become shell collectors. The beaches are being as thoroughly explored and patrolled as at Waikiki or Palm Beach. The screens and conveyer belts at the aggregate plant where coral heads from the lagoon floor are broken up for inclusion in the concrete foundations, are always lined with eagle-eyed shell collectors. As a result many shells are being carried away from Midway.

The Guam boys employed at the Pan-Air Hotel have taken advantage of this shell enthusiasm by importing large numbers of colorful Guam shells and selling them to the construction employees. These Guam shells are being mixed indiscriminately with the Midway shells, and some may eventually gravitate to museums and collectors bearing a Midway label. There is enough similarity between the molluscan fauna of Midway and Guam that one not familiar with the shells of both places could easily overlook such an error. In view of this possible confusion I have checked the collections being made and prepared the appended lists of Midway and Guam shells. I am fortunately situated in being on the only vessel regularly serving Midway, and the returning personnel must travel with us. I have been able to inspect practically all shell collections on or returning from Midway.

Guam shells being sold on Midway

Cypraea caputserpentis	Cypraea tigris
annulus	mauritiana
moneta	arabica
caurica	vitellus
intermedia	Pterocera bryonia
talpa	lambis
lynx	chiragra
carneola	Conus striatus
isabella	Turbo petholatus
erosa	Oliva erythrostoma
argus	Partula gibba
mappa	

Shells being brought from Midway and collected there

Cypraea tessellata	Cerithium obeliseus
isabella	columna
madagascariensis	Conus literatus millepunctatus
sulcidentata	lividus
seurra	flavidus
helvola	cingulum
fimbriata	nanus
semiplota	abbreviatus
ostergaardi	nussatella
Cassis kalosmodix	striatus
vibex	cylindraceus
Dolium perdix	vitulinus
melanostoma	clavus dactylosus
pomum	Drupa digitata (abundant)
Alectrion hirtus	ricinus (rare)
Nassa sertum	Turbo intercostalis
Nerita picea	Trochus sandwicensis
Littorina pinetada	Terebra maculata
Lioconcha hieroglyphica	gouldii
Tellina crassiplicata	crenulata
Pharaonella venusta	chlorata
Charonia tritonis	spauldingae
Cymatium chlorostoma	Strombus hawaiiensis
Polinices mamilla	maculatus
Distorsio anus	gibberulus
Bursa affinis	Rhizochilus madreporarum
Mitra cucumerina	Coralliophila neritoidea
Cerithium mutatum	Columbella livescens
	varians
	turturina
	Modulus tectum